
Galileo Watermark designs through the decades

By **Jane Hobson** on | Amenities & Comfort



This is a special feature from *PAX International's* April World Travel Catering and Onboard Services Hamburg 2020 [edition](#).



Devrim Erbil has been painting the cityscapes of Turkey for decades

Merging art and airline amenities has been a time-honored winning recipe for suppliers and their airline customers.

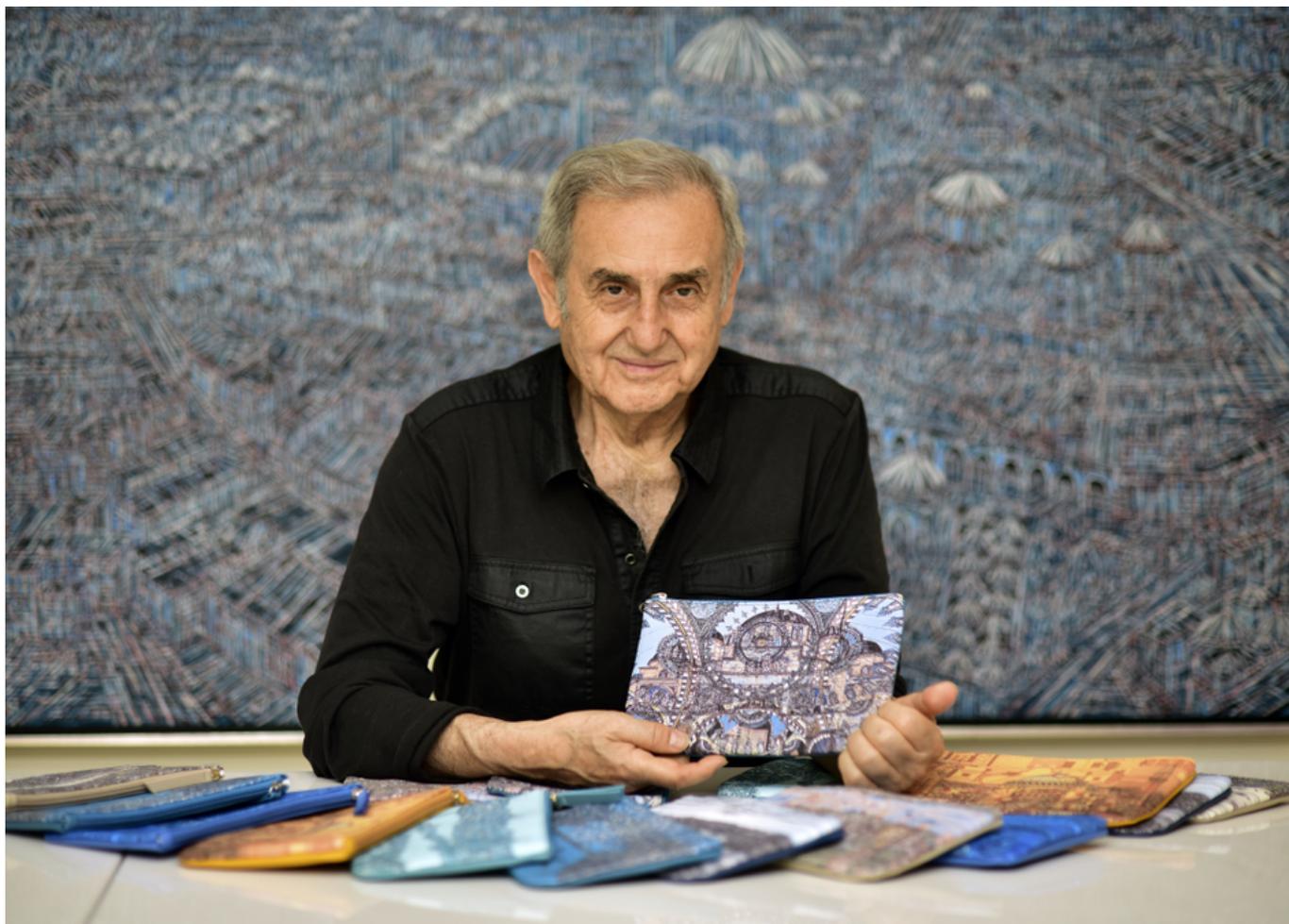
Combining the landscape, culture and art of a home country into a bag allows airlines to show off its national pride and provide a colorful souvenir for the passenger. In this Industry Q&A, *PAX International* talks to [Galileo Watermark's](#) Marketing and Brand Partnerships Director Tamara Vazquez and [Turkish Airlines](#) Senior Vice President of Catering and Inflight Products Zeki Cukur about the recent collaboration with artist Devrim Erbil.

PAX International: Galileo Watermark and Turkish Airlines have collaborated with artist Devrim Erbil for this new amenity kit. Why go this route instead of a conventional brand collaboration?

Tamara Vazquez Perez: While well-known branded collaborations are the norm, we wanted to create something that would differentiate the airline in the competitive kit industry. As the national carrier, Turkish Airlines works hard to promote the national values of Turkey to the world. As such, the intention was to create something truly unique and distinctly Turkish to provide a gateway to the beautiful country.

PAX: What do we need to know about Devrim Erbil and his work as an artist?

Vasquez Perez: Erbil is an award-winning painter from Uşak, Turkey who has been painting abstract and distinctive cityscapes for decades. He is one of the most important living representatives of Turkish contemporary art and is deeply influenced by the cultural heritage of his country and Istanbul, the city he has inhabited for 60 years. His works have been selected for state museums in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir, and are featured internationally in a number of public and private collections. This is the first time we worked with a living artist. It was a very rewarding process.



The designs of artist Devrim Erbil (pictured) are featured on Turkish Airlines' short-haul Business Class kits

PAX: How did this collaboration come to be?

Zeki Cukur: We worked closely with Galileo Watermark to bring this partnership to life, selecting our favorite pieces and developing the concept together. We were able to meet with Erbil himself to solidify our partnership and review the bags.

PAX: Why is this particular artist the right one to go with?

Cukur: As the national flag carrier of Turkey, it is important that we promote and share the rich tapestry of our country with the world. Devrim Erbil is one of the greatest masters of the Turkish painters and was given the title of “State Artist” by the Ministry of Culture in 1991. As one of the winners of the 2019 Presidential Culture and Arts Grand Awards, Erbil is a wonderful ambassador for our country and the arts, and we are extremely proud to work together on this kit program. His paintings of rural and urban landscapes are focused on our homeland and give a wonderful insight into our culture and heritage.

PAX: What steps did Galileo Watermark and Turkish Airlines take to ensure the artwork stays true to the artist?

Vazquez Perez: We were guided by the experts to the paintings and designs to focus on. The hero of this collaboration is of course the artwork. It was important that the bag looked like a piece of art that you might see hanging in a gallery. We chose saffiano leatherette which prints beautifully digitally. The colors are vibrant and the quality crisp. We also included his signature on the back of every bag with the word ‘Istanbul’, created exclusively for Turkish Airlines. It gives the kits an extra special touch and makes the bags feel exclusive. At every stage, the samples were signed off both Erbil and Turkish Airlines.

PAX: What can you tell us about the kits?

Vazquez Perez: The short-haul Business Class kits include anti-slip socks, eye mask, ear plugs, dental kit, crew information stickers, and hand cream and lip balm from natural Kiwi brand [Antipodes](#). The kits also contain a leaflet giving specific information and a quote from Erbil about the artwork featured on each kit.



The amenity kits sport the artist's signature, creating a sense of collectible exclusivity for passengers

PAX: How does this unique featured artwork benefit the passenger experience?

Cukur: With eight pieces to collect that each feature a unique landmark of Istanbul, they are designed to serve as a lasting memory of the passenger's experience with the airline, and allow passengers to collect an iconic piece of art every time they fly. We hope to add a special touch to the onboard experience that will live on beyond the flight.

PAX: What are the challenges and benefits of working with an artist?

Vazquez Perez: I think the challenge was the huge responsibility we all felt to treat the artwork with the utmost respect. This was more than just an everyday kit, it felt like a really special project where we were building a partnership that will certainly delight onboard. The benefit was the huge breadth of artwork that Erbil made available to us. With a career that spans decades, we were spoiled for choice and able to curate an interesting collection of prints.